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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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09/305,331 05/04/99 GUYAN

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EXAMINER

TM02/0314

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ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2163

DATE MAILED:

03/14/01

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/305,331

Applicant(s)

GUYAN ET AL.

Examiner

Dave Robertson

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 May 1999.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are objected to by the Examiner.
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).

Attachment(s)

- 15) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 16) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 17) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 18) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 19) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 20) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

1. **Claims 1-21** have been examined.

Information Disclosure Statement

2. No IDS was on record as of the date of this Action.

Drawings

3. The drawings are objected to by the Draftsperson. See attached FORM PTO 948. Correction is required.

Specification

4. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

On page 13, line 31, the text "...transport medium between the client and the Newco." The word *Newco* not unrecognized nor defined by the Specification.

On page 23, line 27, and in reference to Figure 2A showing UI Controller (206), there is no *Performer Component* shown or described for the activity *The controller 206 calls the Performer Component to see if the performer completing the task has been added to the claim.*

Appropriate correction is required.

Definitions

5. The following definitions of terms and concepts derive from common knowledge in the applicable arts, the prior art as may be cited in this action, and the specification of the instant invention. Where the definition of terms and concepts from common knowledge or the prior art differs from a reading of the applicant's specification, such differences are so noted and supported by citations to the specification or documentation in the art. The purpose of this discussion is to clarify and support

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applicant's use of terms and concepts in the specification and claims, and to guide examination of the claims in allowance or rejection over the prior art in this action.

object—In the Specification (page 2, line 7), "a software package that contains both data a collection of related structures and procedures." Applicant's definition is consistent with its use as known in the art, except for the use of the term *package* and to the definition of *object* as opposed to *class* in object-oriented programming. In the Specification (page 2, line 23), "*An object is a single instance of the class of objects, which is often just called a class.*" Applicant has defined *object* to denote two similar but different concepts; this is avoided in the art but is not uncommon in the literature.

component—In the Specification (page 2, line 16), *components are reusable software modules*. Applicant's definition encompasses reusable software modules including dynamic link libraries and static code libraries common in the art.

component architecture—In the Specification, page 2, line 18, *a set of architecture mechanisms which allow software modules in different process spaces to utilize each others capabilities at run-time*. This is consistent with general use, however, component architectures are normally associated with *distributed* computing systems. Applicant's definition includes multi-process applications running within different process spaces (threads, processes) on a single computer.

framework—In the Specification (page 12, line 23), *a collection of cooperating classes that make up a reusable design solution for a given problem domain*. This is consistent with use in the art.

persist, persistence—In the context of object-oriented programming, the storage and retrieval of objects and their relationships to other objects at the time of the store. Persistence allows an object-oriented software application to resume processing between sessions or to pass data to another application.

adapter—an object that translates or adapts requests of one interface or data type to another interface or data type. This is consistent with common use in the art. An Adapter in object-oriented programming is a common design pattern used to translate object interfaces.

cache—the holding of data at a location local to the point of use, or in preparation or in receipt of data upon movement of data from one location to another. In the Specification (page 1, line 29), *the Business Object is a data holder*.

scenario—a series of steps to be carried out to achieve a specific goal in the context of a specific condition or circumstance.

insurance-related tasks—insurance claims processing including claim folder, history, forms processing, negotiation, correspondence (Specification, pages 138-186).

workflow—The computerization, facilitation or automation of a business process in whole or in part (The Work Flow Management Coalition WFMC, 1995). Insurance claims processing systems are workflow systems.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the **second** paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

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7. **Claims 7, 14, and 21** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. *In Ex Parte Lyell 17 USPQ2d 1548 (Bd. PA&I 1990).*

Claims 7, 14, and 21 recite the limitation "*the goal is insurance-related.*" It is unclear as to the metes and bounds of this limitation. A broad interpretation of *insurance-related* encompasses all structures and activities where some portion thereof may be covered by a contractual guarantee against loss due to some adverse event. A narrow interpretation restricts insurance-related to the insurance claim processing functions disclosed in the specification which only includes such functions but does not specifically exclude a broader interpretation.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

8. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

9. **Claims 1-7 and 15-22** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by TODD in Microsoft® Exchange Server 5.5 Unleashed, 1998.

As to **claim 1**, in reference to the claimed invention, TODD discloses:

Claimed invention:

1. A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for developing component based software capable of handling tasks, comprising:

a data component that stores, retrieves and manipulates data utilizing a plurality of functions;

a client component including:

Reference discloses:

TODD teaches the computer program Microsoft Exchange Server, a component-based software system capable of handling tasks (see Exchange Server Components, pages 8-11, and *tasks* in client software description, page 357).

See Information Store (IS) component, page 43. Messages contain data that are stored, retrieved and manipulated using a plurality of functions. See Outlook 97 client, page 357.

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an adapter component that transmits and receives data to/from the data component, a business component that serves as a data cache and includes logic for manipulating the data, and

a controller component adapted to handle events generated by a user utilizing the business component to cache data and the adapter component to ultimately persist data to a data repository, wherein the client component is adapted for receiving a plurality of tasks that achieve a goal upon completion, allowing users to add new tasks that achieve the goal upon completion, allowing the users to edit the tasks, and generating a historical record of the tasks that are completed.

See Connectors component, page 52.

See Message Transfer Agent, page 48, and SMTP component logic, page 473-4, that caches and manipulates data using logic (messages) prior to relaying.

See Event Services component, page 50.

See Information Store (IS), page 43.

See Outlook client, tasks, page 357.

The addition, editing, and archiving of tasks is an inherent function of the Outlook 97 client.

As to **claim 2**, TODD teaches a workflow mechanism within Microsoft Exchange Server where *provided tasks are generated based on characteristics of a scenario and a set of rules* embodied in a flow template. Exchange Server generates tasks in its Workflow component based on a series of steps to be carried out to achieve a specific goal or *scenario* and the implicit set of rules designed into the flow. See discussion of Workflow within Exchange Server, pages 909-913.

As to **claim 3**, TODD teaches a client component Outlook as capable of handling tasks. Official notice is taken that Outlook 97 *is further adapted for providing indications of levels of importance of the tasks* by the assignment of a user selectable *priority* field to each task.

As to **claim 4**, TODD teaches a client component Outlook 97 *is further adapted for allowing the users to share the tasks with other applications*. Exchange Server is compliant with OLE 2.0 (Object-linking and Embedding, version 2.0) and allows tasks including tasks in a flow template, to be shared with other applications. Official notice is taken that it is old and well-

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known in the art that OLE allows applications to share in the processing of another applications data.

As to **claim 5**, TODD teaches a client component Outlook 97 is *further adapted for automating a portion of work needed to complete the tasks*. Outlook 97 is inherently a *computerized electronic machine* (automated, Merriam-Webster Dictionary) for managing tasks.

As to **claim 6**, TODD teaches a client component Outlook 97 where *the portion of the work automated is writing correspondence*. Email is writing correspondence (*see page 448*) and that writing of correspondence is automated (claim 6 depends on claim 5).

As to **claim 7**, TODD teaches a workflow capability that includes the capability to develop flows where *the goal is insurance-related*. See page 909, "*There are flow templates for a wide range of tasks, from credit approval to customer service and sales.*"

Claims 15-21 being substantially similar and parallel, respectively, to rejected claims 1-7 above, are therefore also rejected over TODD for reasons stated above.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

10. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

11. **Claims 8-14** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over TODD in Microsoft® Exchange Server 5.5 Unleashed, 1998.

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As to **claim 8**, in reference to the claimed invention, TODD discloses:

Claimed invention:

8. A computer program embodied on a computer readable medium for creating a component based architecture capable of handling tasks, comprising:

a user interface form code segment adapted for collecting data from a user input;
a business object code segment adapted for caching data;
an adapter code segment adapted for transmitting data to a server; and
a controller component code segment adapted for handling events generated by the user interacting with the user interface code segment,
creating one or more business objects, interacting with the adapter component to add, retrieve, modify, or delete business objects, and
wherein the computer program is adapted for receiving a plurality of tasks that achieve a goal upon completion, providing validation within a logic unit of work, containing logic to interact with the business component,
allowing users to add new tasks that achieve the goal upon completion,
allowing the users to edit the tasks, and
generating a historical record of the tasks that are completed.

Reference discloses:

TODD teaches the computer program Microsoft Exchange Server, a component-based software system capable of handling tasks (see Exchange Server Components, pages 8-11, and *tasks* in client software description, page 357).

The Outlook 97 client code segment collects data from user input.

See Message Transfer Agent, page 48.

See Connectors component, page 52.

The controller component for handling user events is an inherent part of the Outlook 97 client.

Outlook 97 creates business objects. Adding, retrieving, modifying and deleting business objects

See Outlook client, tasks, page 357.

Exchange Server validates the email address of a message against a directory of valid names (see page 397).

The addition, editing, and archiving of tasks is an inherent function of the Outlook 97 client.

However, TODD does not expressly disclose:

providing dirty flag processing to notify a user of change processing;

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Official notice is taken that setting a dirty flag (or bit) as a value-change-indicator to mark and signal changes to data values in computer software was well-known in the art at the time of the invention (see Aoki, Alexander, and Yamato).

Claims 9-14, being substantially similar in their limitation on claim 8, as are claims 2-7, respectively, on claim 1, are therefore also rejected over TODD for reasons stated above.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

DU et al teaches a distributed, component-capable general purpose task processing workflow system.

BORGHESI et al teaches a system and method for automated insurance claims processing on a distributed client network.

RANDELL teaches workflow system and apparatus suitable to insurance-related task processing.

HOOVER et al teaches distributed, object-oriented component-based system demonstrating insurance-related processing embodiment.

BOSCO et al teaches insurance-related processing in enterprise-wide database system.

ALEXANDER, AOKI, and YAMATO teach use of dirty flag processing to indicate change in computer methods.

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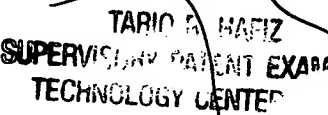
Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Dave Robertson whose telephone number is 703.306.5679. The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th 7:30am to 12:30pm and 2:30pm to 7:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 703.305.9643. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703.308.1396 for regular communications and 703.308.1396 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703.305.3900.

dcr

March 9, 2001


TARIQ A. HAFIZ
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER